

News Release

National Wildlife Refuge System



O'ahu National Wildlife Refuge Complex
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James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge Stilt Shows Off His New Bird-Style Bling

This young male Hawaiian stilt (ae'ō), wearing colorful new legs bands, was recently released in wetlands on James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge near Kahuku. Hawaiian stilts are an endangered species, so when this bird was found critically ill and unable to fly or walk, State-permitted wildlife rehabilitation expert Carolyn Blackburn (left) of Honolulu volunteered to nurse the bird back to health. She has helped to rehabilitate many other sick or injured native birds, but this was her first endangered Hawaiian stilt.

The four small multi-colored leg bands will help biologists to identify and track the bird. According to refuge biologist Mike Silbernagle (right) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the protected and intensively managed wetlands on James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge are one of the most important areas in the State for endangered and native birds that depend on wetlands. Other important birds that nest and feed on the refuge include Hawaiian moorhens ('ālae 'ula) and Hawaiian coots ('ālae ke'oke'o), also both endangered species.



The refuge is open for scheduled schools groups and guided public tours from mid-October to mid-February. During these months, fewer nests and young birds are present, reducing disturbance to these endangered species.

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Note to Editors: This photograph is attached as a separate jpeg file.